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Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2007 regular session

(New York, 22-31 January 2007)

Summary

At its 2007 regular session, held from 22 to 31 January 2007, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had before it 140 applications for consultative status, including applications deferred from its 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 sessions. Of those applications, the Committee recommended 92 applications for consultative status, deferred 42 non-governmental organizations for further consideration at a later date and closed consideration of four non-governmental organizations. It did not recommend one non-governmental organization deferred from previous sessions. The Committee had also before it six requests for reclassification of consultative status, of which it recommended five. In addition, it reviewed 105 quadrennial reports. The Committee heard eight representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The present report contains five draft decisions on matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 92 non-governmental organizations;

(b) Reclassify five non-governmental organizations;

(c) Note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 98 non-governmental organizations;

(d) Decide to close consideration of the applications of four non-governmental organizations.

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By draft decision II, the Council would decide not to grant consultative status to the organization World Sindhi Institute.

By draft decision III, the Council would decide not to grant consultative status to the organization Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec.

By draft decision IV, the Council would take note of the withdrawal of the application of the organization Geneva Call.

By draft decision V, the Council would take note of the present report.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

Draft decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I
Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant consultative status to the following non-governmental organizations:

Special consultative status

A Child is Missing
Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance
African Youth for Transparency
AIDS Action
AIESEC International
All Russian Society of the Deaf
Alliance Niger nature
American Conservative Union
Asian Centre for Human Rights
Asociación Mensajeros de la Paz
Asociación Proyecto Hombre
Association des volontaires pour l'assistance au développement en Guinée
Association for Reproductive and Family Health
Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions
Bahrain Women Society
Bangwe et dialogue
Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti
Center for Human Rights and Environment
Centre d'étude et de recherche pour l'intégration régionale et le développement en Afrique
Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad
Child Development Foundation
Children of the World Fund
China International Public Relations Association
Christian Legal Fellowship
Club of Madrid
Coalition for Community Participation in Governance
Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
Confédération fiscale européenne
Conseil de jeunesse pluriculturelle
Conseil international du sport militaire
Convention of Independent Financial Advisors

Dianova International
Du pain pour chaque enfant
Education pour la population et la vie familiale
Equidad de Género: Ciudadania, Trabajo y Familia
Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention
Euromontana
Fondation Congo Assistance
Fondation Espace Afrique
Fondation Humanus
Foundation for Ecological Security
Geneva International Model United Nations
Global Metro City: the Glocal Forum
Good People World Family
Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities
Institut du développement durable et des relations internationales
International Eurasia Press Fund
International Harm Reduction Association
International Network for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
International Peacebuilding Alliance
International Planned Parenthood Federation (East and South-East Asia and Oceania Region)
Isha Foundation
Join Together Society
Kenya Women's Political Caucus
Korean Sharing Movement
L'auravetl'an Information and Education Network of Indigenous People
Legal Service Coalition
Local Initiatives Program
Lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes et enfants mineurs
National Committee for UNIFEM (Japan)
Ni putes ni soumises
Palakkad District Consumers' Association
People to People International
Prasad Project
Projecto de Saúde em Lisboa
Ramola Bhar Charitable Trust: Project STOP
Safari Club International Foundation
Salesian Missions
Samaritan Community Center
Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation
Solidarité africaine pour la préservation de la paix et de l'environnement en République Centrafricaine
Sudan Association for Combating Landmines
Sudanese Women General Union
Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement
Tandem Project
Transform Drug Policy Foundation
Tribal Link Foundation

Udisha
Vali-Asr Rehabilitation Institute
Viet Nam Family Planning Association
Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Foundation
World Federation of the Deafblind
World Wind Energy Association
Youth Awareness Environmental Forum

Roster

Association amis du centre hospitalier universitaire Mohammed VI
Association of International Automobile Carriers of the Republic of Tajikistan
Build Jamaica Foundation
Fédération internationale des grossistes, importateurs et exportateurs en fournitures automobiles
Korea Institute of Brain Science
Marine Conservation Biology Institute

(b) To reclassify the following non-governmental organization from special consultative status to general consultative status:

International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity

(c) To reclassify the following non-governmental organizations from Roster to special consultative status:

Foundation for Research on Technology Migration and Integration
Globus et Locus
International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation
International Ocean Institute

(d) To note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of the following non-governmental organizations:

Africa Legal Aid
African American Islamic Institute
AFS Intercultural Programs
American Society of Criminology
Anti-Slavery International
Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network
Asian Institute of Transport Development
Assembly of the First Nations
Association d'assistance aux grands handicapés à domicile
Association des états généraux des étudiants de l'Europe
Association européenne contre les violences faites aux femmes au travail
Association internationale des mouvements familiaux de formation rurale
Association pour la formation et l'insertion sociale de l'adolescent et de la femme
Becket Fund for Religious Liberty
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Canadian Race Relations Foundation
CARE
Centre Europe-Tiers Monde
Centre for Women, the Earth, the Divine

China Disabled Persons' Federation
Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament
Chinese Women's Association of America
Church World Service
Cohort for Research on Environment, Urban Management and Human Settlements
Collectif sénégalais des africaines pour la promotion de l'éducation relative à l'environnement
Comité d'action pour les droits de l'enfant et de la femme
Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations
Couple to Couple League International
Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
Dominican Leadership Conference
Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers)
Ecopeace: Middle East Environment NGO Forum
Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance
Family Health International
Family Research Council
Federation of National Representations of the Experiment in International Living
Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya
Friends World Committee for Consultation
General Confederation of Trade Unions
Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres
ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability
Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation
Indonesian National Council on Social Welfare
International Association for Human Values
International Association of Lions Clubs
International Center for Research on Women
International College of Surgeons
International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage
International Communities for the Renewal of the Earth
International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction
International Council of Chemical Associations
International Environmental Law Research Centre
International Federation of Inspection Agencies
International Federation of Training and Development Organizations
International Fund for Animal Welfare
International Health Awareness Network
International Investment Center
International PEN
International Research Foundation for Development
International Society of Doctors for the Environment
International Union of Psychological Science
International Women's Writing Guild
International Women's Year Liaison Group
INTERSOS
IPAS
Junior Chamber International
Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women

Kiwanis International
Korea Freedom League
MAMTA Health Institute for Mother and Child
Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic
Medico International
Mediterranean Women's Studies Center
Mennonite Central Committee
National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
Native American Rights Funds
Netherlands Centre for Indigenous Peoples
Network of East-West Women
Open Family Australia
Organization of the Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America
Oxfam International
Parliamentarians for Global Action
Peace Boat
Population Reference Bureau
Rainforest Foundation
Rehabilitation International
School Sisters of Notre Dame
Society for International Development
Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem
Teresian Association
United Nations Watch
Womankind Worldwide
World Information Transfer
World Organization of the Scout Movement
World Road Association

(e) To note that the Committee decided to close consideration of the request for consultative status made by the following non-governmental organizations:

Angel Foundation
Association Wadelbarka pour la prospérité des familles mauritaniennes
Conflict Management Group
Religious Freedom Coalition

Draft decision II
Application of the World Sindhi Institute

The Economic and Social Council decides not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization World Sindhi Institute.

Draft decision III
Application of the Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec

The Economic and Social Council decides not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec.

Draft decision IV
Application of Geneva Call

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the withdrawal of the application of the non-governmental organization Geneva Call for consultative status with the Council.

Draft decision V
Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2007 regular session

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2007 regular session.

II. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

2. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 1st to 13th meetings, held from 22 to 31 January 2007. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/2007/R.2 and Add.1-21) and also one compilation of applications for consultative status deferred from previous sessions (E/C.2/2007/CRP.1).

A. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee

3. The Committee considered item 3 (a) of its agenda, applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee, contained in document E/C.2/2007/CRP.1, at its 5th, 6th, 8th and 11th through 13th meetings, on 24 to 31 January 2007.

Applications recommended

4. The Committee recommended that the Council grant consultative status to 10 organizations whose applications had been deferred from previous sessions (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)):

AIDS Action

American Conservative Union

Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions

Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti

Center for Human Rights and Environment

Human Rights Congress for Bangladesh Minorities

Tandem Project

Udisha

Vali-Asr Rehabilitation Institute

Viet Nam Family Planning Association

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

5. The Committee deferred its consideration of the applications of the following 21 non-governmental organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee during its 2007 regular session:

Africa Action

Ambedkar Centre for Justice and Peace

Asian-Eurasian Human Rights Forum

Association El Houda pour l'action feminine

Credo-Action

Foundation for Research and Support of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea

Global Ecolabelling Network

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage

International Bureau for Epilepsy

International Centre for Peace Studies

International Crisis Group

Kashmiri American Council

Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele

Mountain Women Development Organization

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Sahara for Life Trust

Social Action Forum for Manav Adhikar

Social Alert

Society for the Promotion of Youth and Masses

Southern Organizing Cooperative

Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad

Applications closed

6. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 24 January 2007, the Committee decided to close consideration of the applications of four non-governmental organizations as there had been no contact with those organizations for several sessions, on the understanding that the decision would not prevent those organizations from submitting a new application, should they decide to do so (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (e)):

Angel Foundation

Association Wadelbarka pour la propérité des familles mauritaniennes

Conflict Management Group

Religious Freedom Coalition

Applications not recommended

World Sindhi Institute

7. At its 5th and 8th meetings, on 24 and 25 January, the Committee considered the application of World Sindhi Institute.

8. The representative of Pakistan pointed out that the non-governmental organization World Sindhi Institute, based in Washington, D.C., had, despite its assurances to the contrary, continued to indulge in activities that undermined the

territorial integrity of Pakistan and that were inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, and with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. He gave examples of action taken by the organization and statements given, which were in violation of the Charter and resolution 1996/31. He asked the Committee to recommend not granting consultative status to the organization. The delegations of Egypt, the Sudan and Turkey supported the contention made by the delegate of Pakistan. The decision not to grant consultative status to World Sindhi Institute was finally taken by consensus.

Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec

9. At its 6th, 8th and 12th meetings, on 24, 25 and 30 January, the Committee considered the application of Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec, a non-governmental organization deferred from previous sessions of the Committee. The Committee examined the replies provided by the organization to the questions posed by delegations. It also heard the representative of the organization.

10. On 30 January, the Chairman made a statement, in which he informed the Committee that the delegations of Egypt, Guinea, Pakistan, Qatar and the Sudan had requested a vote on the decision to be taken on the organization.

Statement in explanation of the vote before the vote

11. A statement in explanation of the vote before the vote was made by the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in which he stated that every non-governmental organization that met the criteria set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 deserved to be granted consultative status with the Council. The criteria applied regardless of the nature of the organization. He said that the resolution explicitly confirmed the need to take into account the full diversity of non-governmental organizations. It set out the criteria according to which non-governmental organizations should be granted consultative status, namely, if they (a) were concerned with matters falling within the competence of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies; (b) had aims and purposes that were in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations; and (c) undertook to support the work of the United Nations and to promote knowledge of its principles and activities. The organization obviously fulfilled the criteria. Much of its work was in support of United Nations activities, including in the fields of health, gender and human rights. The organization would add an important voice to United Nations discussions and represented an important constituency with the same right as all others to engage in the work of the United Nations. He emphasized that over 2,800 non-governmental organizations had been granted consultative status with the Council. Many of them had undoubtedly espoused views or policies that were not necessarily shared by all Governments; however, they had to make their views known at the United Nations.

12. In recent years, the Committee had only rejected applications from organizations that had carried out actions against a Member State or that had been connected to terrorist activities. The Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec obviously did not fall in that category and rejection of its application only served to undermine that important consideration.

13. He stated that when the Council had decided to grant consultative status to three similar non-governmental organizations, which had also been rejected by the Committee in the past year, it acknowledged the principle of diversity and respect for others. It was the hope of the United Kingdom that the Committee would be suitably guided by that Economic and Social Council decision and would rightly recommend the organization for consultative status.

14. The Committee then proceeded to the vote. By a roll-call vote of 8 in favour to 6 against, with 3 abstentions, it decided to recommend not granting consultative status to the organization Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Colombia, Israel, Peru, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

Burundi, China, Egypt, Guinea, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Angola, India, Turkey.

Statements in explanation of the vote after the vote

15. In his statement in explanation of the vote after the vote, the representative of the United Kingdom deeply regretted the decision taken by the Committee not to recommend Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec. That act of simple discrimination ran contrary to the principles of the United Nations, of the Economic and Social Council and of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. It served to do nothing more than reinforce the view that the Committee could not be trusted to undertake properly the work with which it was tasked. It was the intention of his delegation to continue to argue for the full inclusion and involvement of non-governmental organizations representing the gay and lesbian community in the work of the United Nations. He believed that this view had been shared by the Council in the past year. He very much hoped that the Council would share the view once again.

General statement after the vote

16. The representative of Canada, speaking as an Observer State, was of the view that it was crucial for legitimate non-governmental organizations representing diverse constituencies within civil society to have an equal opportunity to express their views in United Nations forums. Consequently, her delegation was dismayed by the Committee's decision not to recommend Coalition gaie et lesbienne du Québec. Her Government remained deeply concerned by the pattern of discrimination demonstrated by the Committee in its treatment of applications from non-governmental organizations dealing with issues related to sexual orientation.

17. The representative of the organization had the opportunity to respond to questions posed by several Committee members during the discussion on the organization before the vote. In his response, he said that his organization clearly condemned paedophilia and invited organizations and other individuals concerned to denounce it as well. In addition, his organization helped the police to combat the phenomenon. As for civil unions and same sex marriage, he said that the Québec

Parliament had unanimously approved such unions so that same sex couples could enjoy the same rights as others. He stated that his organization was working in Canadian territory, within the framework of Canadian and Québec law.

B. New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification

18. The Committee considered item 3 (b) of its agenda, new applications for consultative status, contained in documents E/C.2/2007/R.2 and Add.1-21 at its 1st through 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th through 13th meetings, held from 22 to 25 and 29 to 31 January 2007.

1. New applications for consultative status

Applications recommended

19. The Committee recommended that consultative status with the Council be granted to 92 organizations, which had submitted new applications (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)).

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

20. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the applications of the following 20 organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee at its 2007 regular session:

American Sports Committee

Ankara Foundation of Children with Leukemia

Armenian Constitutional Right-Protective Centre

Asia Pacific Women's Watch

Association Sahel solidarité action

Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights

Cercle de recherche sur les droits et les devoirs de la personne humaine

Cercle national des droits de l'homme

Chinese Society for Corrosion and Protection

Coordination internationale pour la décennie

European Centre for Law and Justice

International Human Rights Observer

Islamic Human Rights Commission

Jewish National Fund

Marijuana Policy Project Foundation

National Democratic Institute for International Affairs

Observer Research Foundation

People's Life Center

Students for Sensible Drug Policy

Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights

2. New requests for reclassification

21. At its 4th and 12th meetings, on 23 and 30 January 2007, the Committee had before it six requests for reclassification for consultative status contained in document E/C.2/2007/R.3. It decided to recommend the reclassification of four organizations from Roster to special and one organization from special to general (see chap. I, draft decision I, subparas. (b) and (c)). It did not recommend the reclassification of the following organization from special to general status:

Fundación Intervida

C. Application of a non-governmental organization resulting from the merger of two non-governmental organizations already in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

22. The Committee deferred its consideration of the application of the following non-governmental organization, with the agreement of the organizations concerned, pending further clarification of a number of issues raised by the Committee:

International Trade Union Confederation

D. Applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that have merged with other non-governmental organizations

23. The Committee did not review the applications of the following organizations, which had merged with organizations not having consultative status with the Council, since the Secretariat had not yet received their updated applications:

(a) International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation-International Sports Organization for the Disabled, a merger of the International Sports Organization for the Disabled, in special consultative status, and the International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation, not in consultative status with the Council;

(b) International Association of Women Judges, a merger of the International Women Judges Foundation, in special consultative status, and the International Association of Women Judges, not in consultative status with the Council;

(c) Center for Health and Population and Social Welfare, Future Institute for Sustainable Development, a merger of the World Population Society, in special consultative status, and the Center for Health and Population and Social Welfare and the Future Institute for Sustainable Development, not in consultative status with the Council.

III. Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in general and special status with the Economic and Social Council

A. Deferred quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Council

24. The Committee considered item 4 (a) of its agenda at its 7th, 11th and 13th meetings, on 25, 30 and 31 January 2007. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing a compilation of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in general and consultative status with the Council on their activities during the period 1999 to 2006, which had been deferred from previous sessions of the Committee (E/C.2/2007/CRP.2). The Committee took note of the quadrennial report of one organization (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (d)).

25. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the quadrennial reports of the following five organizations pending response from the organization to questions posed by the Committee:

Centrist Democrat International

Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos

International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples

International Press Institute

National Council of Women of Thailand

B. Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Council

26. The Committee considered agenda item 4 (b) of its agenda at its 7th, 8th, 10th and 13th meetings, on 25, 29 and 31 January 2007. It had before it a note by the Secretary-General containing new quadrennial reports (E/C.2/2007/2, Add.1-19). The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 98 organizations (chap. I, draft decision II, subpara. (d)).

27. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the quadrennial report of the following organization pending responses to the questions posed by the Committee:

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

28. The Chairman of the Committee made a special mention of the following five non-governmental organizations, which had made notable contributions to the United Nations development agenda:

CARE

Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations

Junior Chamber International

Korea Freedom League

Parliamentarians for Global Action

IV. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

29. At its 9th meeting, on 29 January 2007, the Committee heard an oral statement from the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who reported on the activities of the Section. The Chief gave an analysis of the composition and assignment of duties of the Section's personnel in response to questions raised during the 2006 resumed session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

30. The Chief noted that provisions under Article 71 of the Charter made the Economic and Social Council the entry point for engaging non-governmental organizations in the work of the United Nations. In June 1946, the Council had established the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to deal with the accreditation process to the Economic and Social Council.

31. The Chief pointed out that, as the substantive secretariat of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, the Section actually worked under two mandates, Article 71 of the Charter and Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, which defined the consultative relationship between the Council and non-governmental organizations. In fulfilling its mandate, the Section was the focal point within the Secretariat for non-governmental organizations seeking or already in consultative status with the Council.

32. The Section provided advice and information on matters relevant to non-governmental organizations, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, Member States, the non-governmental organization community and concerned outside entities, as appropriate.

33. The Chief reported that the functions of the Section could be divided into the following four main areas:

(a) Screening applications from non-governmental organizations seeking consultative status with the United Nations;

(b) Processing quadrennial reports, filed by non-governmental organizations every four years to document their activities;

(c) Conducting oversight of the authorization and accreditation process of 2,700 non-governmental organizations in consultative status;

(d) Facilitating the consultative arrangement through the outreach programme of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network.

34. In relation to the staffing of the Section, the Chief indicated that there were six persons at the Professional level and six at the General Service level. The staffing table was supplemented by a number of i...erns assigned to the Section for periods of two to three months. She added, however, that as useful as the arrangement had proved to be for both interns and the Section, the constant turnover of interns (including time lost in training newcomers) could not be considered a substitute for permanent in-house staffing, which ensured institutional memory and consistent administrative stability. She then described how the various functions of the Section were distributed among its staff.

35. Information was also provided on the "Paperless Committee" initiative, which called for the strategic utilization of information technology in an integrated approach to planning and managing meetings and documentation. While it facilitated the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, the paperless system had also served since 2002 as a record management and archiving system, resulting in the increased efficiency of the secretariat of the Committee and in a savings of over $632,610 in 2006-2007 to the Organization.

36. The Chief concluded by stressing the need for improved information and communications technology (ICT) and human resources capacities in the light of the increasing workload of the Section. She mentioned that the work of the Section had evolved to the point where there was an urgent need for staff who had the requisite high-tech skills to enable the Section to take advantage of and fully utilize current technologies.

37. During the ensuing discussion, the Committee members expressed their satisfaction with the implementation of the paperless system and reiterated their support for the work of the Section.

38. In relation to the partnership of the Mumbai Educational Trust and the Section, the delegation of India mentioned that a fellowship agreement could be envisaged to provide the ICT expertise required to support the paperless system.

39. The delegation of China stated that the Committee's paperless goal had not only lightened the load the delegates carried, but had enabled them to work wherever there was access to an Internet connection. It was hoped that the initiative could be expanded to other intergovernmental processes of the United Nations.

40. The delegations of China and India called for the increased involvement of non-governmental organizations in more countries, in particular from countries in the South. The delegation of Cuba noted that while the paperless system had made the Committee's work easier for the most part, delegations often required hard copies of documents to submit to their capitals, in particular in countries without readily available Internet service, and that paper copies should remain available for delegations that required them.

41. The delegation of the United States noted the efficiency of the paperless system and the increase in the number of quadrennial reports submitted for review by the Committee. It also noted the provision of applications on CD-ROM, which improved the review and communications processes regarding applications with the capital. The United States delegation requested a copy of the oral report of the Chief of the Section in order to verify and evaluate the information presented during the agenda item on the strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section. The delegation reaffirmed its belief that the Section needed to concentrate on its mandate, that is, to support the work of the Committee. It also suggested that some of the work done by the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network was better placed with the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs or the Department of Public Information, since it was outside the scope of the Committee, and that further discussion of the matter was needed.

42. With regard to the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network, the delegation of Cuba recognized the commendable work done in support of non-governmental organizations coming from developing countries

and praised the current activities of the Section and the Service, which are in full accordance with the mandates given to them in Council resolutions, including resolution 1996/31.

43. The Deputy Coordinator of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service gave a presentation on one of the Service's most recent publications, on the topic of accountability of non-governmental organizations. The Service was an inter-agency programme of the United Nations, established in 1975 to complement the formal consultative system of United Nations/non-governmental organization relations.

44. The publication of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service on debating non-governmental organization accountability attempted to help the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and those non-governmental organizations engaged with the system to develop an understanding of the current debate and practices and attempted to reveal some of the myths around non-governmental organization accountability, as well as point towards a more progressive agenda on non-governmental organization accountability, placing democracy and human rights firmly at the centre of the debate. It addressed questions regarding to whom non-governmental organizations should be accountable, the relation between the State and civil society, the debate regarding non-governmental organization representation and the complexities and risks in regulating non-governmental organizations. The publication gave examples of new voluntary, self-regulation initiatives and concludes that a rights-based approach and the highest levels of integrity, transparency and openness need to be built into any process to develop accountability frameworks.

V. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, including the process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations, and Council decision 1995/304

A. Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group

1. Report on the informal working group meeting in 2006

45. On 30 January, at its 11th meeting, Octavian Stamate (Romania), facilitator of the informal working group of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, thanked the representative of Turkey, Serhat Aksen, for having chaired the informal working group during his absence from Headquarters when it had met on 14 November 2006.

46. Mr. Stamate believed that, given the high workload of the Section, the Committee should support the strengthening of the Section in order to sustain its current working capacity and improve its performance. The informal working group could consider a set of options to better guide the Section in order to enable it to better serve its mandate and support the work of the Committee.

47. Mr. Aksen reported to the Committee on the issues reviewed by the working group. He said that the working group he had chaired was composed of nine delegations. The items on the agenda for that meeting included consideration on the ways the Committee should reflect its debate on deferred applications in the Committee's report and on the follow-up by the Secretariat pursuant to the request made by the Council at its substantive session of 2006 concerning the Danish National Association of Gays and Lesbians, Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany and International Lesbian and Gay Federation — Europe, organizations that the Committee had not recommended for consultative status.

48. Regarding the deferred applications issue, the working group had had a difficult task in finding a consensus on how to report on a deferred application referred to in the report of its resumed session in May 2006; however, owing to the support of the Rapporteur of the Committee, Mr. Stamate, positive negotiations and the constructive approach of the delegation of Cuba, a consensus had been reached. As a consequence, the report of the Committee had been presented and adopted by the Council, at its resumed session, in November 2006.

49. Regarding the request of the Council concerning the three organizations which the Committee had not recommended at its resumed session in May 2006, the working group had been informed of the steps taken by the Secretariat to provide Council members with all data provided and information made available to the Committee when it reviewed those applications, as well as the transcripts of the meetings of the Committee when the review had been held. At the same meeting, the working group had decided upon the dates for the informals preceding the 2007 regular session of the Committee.

2. Issues to be placed on the informal working group agenda in 2007

50. Several suggestions were made by Member States for inclusion in the agenda of the working group in 2007. They included: a review of the reclassification procedure; the need for improved monitoring of the submission of quadrennial reports by non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status with the Council; the need to identify mechanisms to better monitor the work of the non-governmental organizations with Roster status and that did not have to submit quadrennial reports; simplification of the application form; identification of a procedure to address the mergers of non-governmental organizations in consultative status; and a procedure permitting a better division of time between the regular and resumed sessions of the Committee.

B. Other related matters

51. At its 12th meeting, on 30 January, the Committee considered the application of Geneva Call, a non-governmental organization based in Geneva, which the Committee had decided to recommend for special consultative status at its 2006 session. During its substantive session in 2006, the Council had decided to refer back to the Committee the application of that organization (Economic and Social Council decision 2006/221). The organization had informed the Committee that it had withdrawn its application for the time being.

52. The representative of Turkey stated that his delegation had not objected to recommending consultative status during the 2006 session, on the understanding that the non-governmental organization would inform and seek consent from relevant States before contacting armed non-State actors, some of which were on the list of terrorist organizations. However, despite the assurances by Geneva Call to the effect that it would work in transparency, that it had no interest in working against States and that it endeavoured to operate in a fully collaborative manner with States, the organization had acted to the contrary. Geneva Call had signed a "deed of commitment" with PKK/Kadek/Kongra-Gel, a terrorist organization that had caused the death of tens of thousands of citizens and was featured on several lists of terrorist organizations. He said that the organization might argue that it was contributing to the removal of landmines; however, in practical terms, Geneva Call was helping the organization to bolster its visibility. After signing the deed, a representative of the terrorist organization had claimed a diplomatic victory, saying that the group would continue its efforts for international recognition. The statement itself clearly indicated that signing such a document was not only a humanitarian deed. The organization had been awarded status, recognition and some sort of legality. Turkey would continue to oppose the Geneva Call's request for consultative status with the Council.

53. The delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom recognized the work of the non-governmental organization in the area of landmine removal, but noted that its recent association was unacceptable. They expressed the hope that the organization would use the time wisely and work with the Government of Turkey to resolve the matter. The two delegations expressed their commitment to work with the non-governmental organization and members of the Committee in resolving the issue.

54. The delegations of Romania and Pakistan also supported the representative of Turkey.

VI. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46

55. There were no requests for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46.

VII. Consideration of special reports and complaints by Member States

56. There were no special reports or complaints by Member States before the Committee at the 2007 regular session.

VIII. General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network

57. At its 9th meeting, on 29 January, the Committee heard a report on the issue by the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, who noted that during the 10 years that she had been administrating the Section, the number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council had nearly tripled, from 1,041 in 1996 to 2,865 at the end of 2006. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, there had been a discernible shift in the geographical distribution of organizations attaining consultative status, with an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations from previously underrepresented regions and countries. The shift, she asserted, was undoubtedly the result of activities undertaken by the outreach of the Section's United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network programme.

58. Recognizing the difficulties of addressing the North-South imbalance, the Chief of the Section recalled that the Council had endorsed, through its decision 2002/225, the establishment of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network and the general voluntary trust fund to support its activities as a means of enhancing communication, reducing the gap between North and South and promoting partnerships between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, as well as among non-governmental organizations throughout the various regions of the world.

59. The Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section then reported on the various activities that had been conducted by the regional coordinators of the Network. Training programmes and briefings had been provided, in particular about United Nations reforms and the new Council mandates, such as the annual ministerial review and the biennial development cooperation forum. Several projects had been developed concerning the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, including the annual ministerial review innovation fair, to be held in Geneva in July 2007. Following her presentation, the delegations of China and Turkey expressed their strong support for the Network.

60. The delegation of Turkey pointed out that it had been one of the first countries to contribute to the trust fund. The delegate mentioned that in 2005 the Government of Turkey had contributed $10,000 to the trust fund, which had been used in an efficient manner to launch the Network in Turkey, and that the residual fund balance of $684 could be retained by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for future activities related to the Network. The delegation of Turkey then made a suggestion that in the future, the Section could provide statistics on the number of non-governmental organizations whose applications had increased from the regions in which Network meetings had been held, in order to provide data on the initiative's regional impact.

61. The delegation of China was pleased that, through activities undertaken by the Network, projects had been conducted with China's non-governmental organizations, and that many Chinese non-governmental organizations had become more familiar with the work of the Council and what was involved in being granted consultative status. It also stressed its desire for the Committee to promote the work

of the Network and the issue of consultative status with the Council in developing countries.

62. The delegation of Dominica expressed its appreciation of the improved number and geographical distribution of the non-governmental organizations that had attained consultative status since 1996. However, he suggested the possibility for devising indicators for verifying that those organizations were practicing good governance and for ensuring that national non-governmental organizations were in good standing with their Governments.

63. The Committee members requested that the PowerPoint presentation be made available to them so as to better evaluate the impact of the outreach programme.

IX. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

64. The Committee held its 2007 regular session from 22 to 31 January. The Committee held 13 meetings.

B. Attendance

65. The session was attended by the 19 members of the Committee.

66. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations, observers for two non-member States, representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and an observer for a non-governmental organization also attended. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

67. At its 2007 regular session, the Committee heard eight representatives of non-governmental organizations who were given the opportunity to respond to questions raised by the Committee. The additional information provided by the representatives facilitated the debate and the work of the Committee in taking its decisions.

C. Election of officers

68. At its 1st meeting, on 22 January, the Committee elected the following officer by acclamation:

Chairman:

Pedro A. Roa Arboleda (Colombia)

69. Also at its 1st meeting, on 22 January, the Committee re-elected the following officers by acclamation:

Vice-Chairpersons:

Octavian Stamate (Romania)
Bilal Hayee (Pakistan)
Hasan Hamid Hasan (Sudan)
Serhat Aksen (Turkey)

70. At the same meeting, the Committee also re-elected Octavian Stamate (Romania), by acclamation, to serve as Rapporteur.

D. Agenda

71. At its 1st meeting, on 22 January, the Committee adopted the provisional agenda for its 2007 session (E/C.2/2007/1).

72. At the same meeting, the Committee approved its organization of work.

E. Documentation

73. The list of documents before the Committee at its 2007 regular session is contained in annex II to the present report.

X. Adoption of the report of the Committee at its 2007 regular session

74. At its 13th meeting, on 31 January, the Committee adopted the draft report as contained in document E/C.2/2007/L.1 and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report, in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex I

List of participants

Members

Angola	Ismael A. Gaspar Martins, Estevao Alberto, Salvador Allende D. Bom Jesús, José Daio da Silva
Burundi	Helménégilde Nkurabagaya, Albert Singiro
China	Zhang Dan, Zhang Meifang, Guo Jiakun, Luo Yi
Colombia	Claudia Blum, Jairo Montoya, Pedro Agustín Roa Arboleda, Jorge Ricardo Torres-Rueda
Cuba	Rodrigo Malmierca Diaz, Ileana Núñez Mordoche, Luis Amorós Núñez, Lydia González Navarro, Claudia Pérez Alvarez
Dominica	Crispin S. Gregoire, Zilpha Theodore
Egypt	Maged Abdelaziz, Khaled Albakly, Mohamed Elbadri, Soha Gendi, Mohamed Elghitany
Guinea	Alpha Ibrahima Sow, Paul Goa Zoumanigui, Mamadouba Camara, Mohamed Chérif Diallo
India	Nirupam Sen, Ajai Malhotra, B.N. Reddy
Israel	Ilan Fluss, Harel Shoham
Pakistan	Munir Akram, Farukh Amil, Imtiaz Hussain, Bilal Hayee
Peru	Romy Tincopa
Qatar	Jamal Nasser Al-Bader, Mohammed Sultan Al-Kuwari, Amr Ghaleb
Romania	Octavian Stamate, Elizabeta David
Russian Federation	Andrey A. Nikiforov, Oleg A. Demekhin, Vladimir Y. Vertogradov, Boris Chernenko, Alexander A. Abramov
Sudan	Hassan Hamid Hassan
Turkey	Serhat Aksen
United Kingdom	Harriet Cross, Tom Woodroffe, Simon Finn
United States of America	Richard Miller, Paul Birdsall, Mariano Ceinos-Cox, Peggy Kerry

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

Algeria, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Comoros, Greece, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Ukraine and Viet Nam

Non-member States represented by observers

Holy See and Palestine

Specialized agencies

World Intellectual Property Organization, World Bank

Annex II

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.2/2007/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
E/C.2/2007/2 and Add.1-19	4 (b)	Quadrennial reports
E/C.2/2007/L.1	11	Draft report
E/C.2/2007/CRP.1	3 (a)	Deferred applications for consultative status
E/C.2/2007/CRP.2	4 (a) and (b)	Quadrennial reports
E/C.2/2007/CRP.3 and 4	6 (b)	Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group
E/C.2/2007/CRP.5	9	General voluntary trust fund
E/C.2/2007/R.2 and Add.1-21	3 (b)	New applications for consultative status
E/C.2/2007/R.3	3 (b)	New requests for reclassification